

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 2627

BANGKOK FOR REGIONAL COURIER OFFICE

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ACOM, ETRN, CH
SUBJECT: COURIER SERVICE TO PEKING

REF: YOUR MEMO REQUESTING COMMENT ON CHINESE AIRLINES

SUMMARY: CAAC, DESPITE SHORTCOMINGS, IS DEPENDABLE. FOREIGN CARRIERS ALSO PROVIDE SERVICE TO PEKING FROM RANGOON, BOMBAY AND KARACHI. (FYI: CONGEN HONG KONG HAS RECOMMENDED USE OF NON- PROFESSIONAL COURIERS TO MOVE MAIL TO PEKING VIA CHINESE RAIL AND AIR SERVICES). END SUMMARY

1. WE BELIEVE THAT CHINESE AVIATION ADMINISTRATION OF CHINA (CAAC) SERVICE IS DEPENDABLE ON BOTH FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC TRUNK ROUTES. THERE ARE SEVERAL PROBLEMS, HOWEVER, WHICH PERTAIN AT LEAST FOR THE MONTHS JUST AHEAD. THE POINTS OF ENTRY SERVED BY CAAC REMAIN LIMITED TO RANGOON, HANOI, PYONGYANG AND IRKUTSK. CAAC'S GOOD SAFETY RECORD IS PRESERVED BY THE TENDENCY TO OPERATE ONLY IN FAVORABLE FLYING CONDITIONS GIVEN THE LACK OF NAVIGATION AIDS, AND INCLEMENT WEATHER THEREFORE MAY LEAD TO DELAYS OF A DAY OR MORE, PARTICULARLY IN THE ON-COMING MONSOON SEASON. THIRDLY, ONLY THE CAAC FLIGHT FROM IRKUTSK FLIES DIRECTLY TO PEKING; THE OTHER THREE ENTRY POINTS ENTAIL CHANGE OF FLIGHTS AND/ OR INTERIM STOPS EN ROUTE TO PEKING.

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2. FOREIGN CARRIERS OPERATING TO PEKING ARE STILL LIMITED TO AEROFLOT AND PIA. AIR FRANCE AND THE NEW ETHIOPIAN AIR LINE SERVICE FLY TO SHANGHAI. WITHIN THIS REGION AIR FRANCE TRANSITS RANGOON, PIA ORIGINATES IN KARACHI, AND EAL TRANSITS BOMBAY. USE OF THESE FLIGHTS MIGHT CONSUME LESS COURIER TIME THAN USE OF CAAC, BUT, AS IN THE CASE OF CAAC, FLIGHTS ARE LIMITED TO ONE OR TWO PER WEEK. OTHER AIRLINES (JAL, IRAN AIR) MAY BEGIN SERVICE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS BUT PROBABLY NOT BEFORE MAY OR JUNE.

3. CONGEN HONG KONG RECOMMENDED RECENTLY TO THE DEPARTMENT (HK 2128 SENT DEPT. ONLY) THAT OUR LIAISON OFFICE IN PEKING BE SERVED INITIALLY BY NON- PROFESSIONAL COURIERS FROM CONGEN HONG KONG. THIS WOULD HAVE SEVERAL ADVANTAGES, INCLUDING THAT OF OBLIVIATING THE NEED TO ADD ROUTES AND PERSONNEL TO THE CURRENT COURIER WORKLOAD. WE REMAIN WILLING AND ABLE TO MOVE THE MAIL FROM HONG KONG VIA RAIL TO CANTON AND ONWARD VIA CAAC TO PEKING. THE TRIP WOULD NORMALLY REQUIRE ONE DAY UP AND TWO DAYS BACK. WE HAVE CHINESE RAIL AND AIR SCHEDULES AND CAN PROVIDE THEM TO YOU OR DEPT. ON REQUEST.

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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